
A History of Our Firefighters' Memorial

On the night of February 19, 1936, a raging fire at the old I.O.O.F. Hall at 198 South High Street claimed the lives of two Columbus Division of Fire captains, one lieutenant and two firefighters. Two other firefighters were seriously injured and subsequently retired from the Department.

From the ashes of that tragic fire arose a dream, the dream of a memorial honoring all firefighters who have answered their last alarm. In 1957, Fire Chief Walter Strickfaden commissioned Firefighter Joe Pishitelli to be project coordinator for the construction of a Firefighters Memorial. Land was acquired through a City Council ordinance, and Lieutenant Ed Nothacker was selected to design the Memorial. On November 30, 1957 ground was broken at Marconi Boulevard and Gay Street, and the Firefighters' Memorial became more than just a dream.

Using only private funds, Nothacker and Pishitelli worked tirelessly to coordinate construction of the Memorial. Nearly all labor was donated by firefighters. The Memorial was anchored by four 12-foot fluted limestone columns on a 6 1/2-foot base. Four matching stone benches were placed around the perimeter of the monument. A bronze tower bell, from a former Columbus fire house, was hung between the columns. Bronze Maltese crosses were placed at the top of the Memorial on each of the four sides. Those crosses and the Memorial's plaques were cast from smelted fire house bells.

On April 13, 1958, less than five months after groundbreaking, the Memorial was dedicated by Mayor M.E. Sensenbrenner. A 30-foot aluminum flag pole on a terrazzo base was added in 1965.

In 1988, firefighters undertook a major renovation project for the Memorial site. Under the guiding hand of Captain Jim Ross, the original Memorial was refurbished and the grounds were newly landscaped. The funds, materials and labor were provided by members of the Columbus Division of Fire and the Central Ohio community. A black granite monument was added to the site, engraved with the names of all Columbus firefighters who have died in the line of duty. On October 16, 1988 the Firefighters' Memorial was re-dedicated with the solemn lighting of the new Eternal Flame.

Today, the Firefighters' Memorial still stands as proudly as it did at its dedication over fifty years ago. Our firefighters' pride is reflected in the Memorial, as firefighters continue to devote both time and energy to its upkeep. And every year, the tower bell is tolled at a memorial service held at this beautiful and historic site.



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
DIVISION OF FIRE



In Memoriam

		Departed	Dates of Service
Assistant Chief	Daniel J. Vincent	02/06/2012	1971-2001
Battalion Chief	Kenneth W. Davis	10/25/2011	1975-2001
Battalion Chief	James L. Siemer	01/12/2012	1962-1993
Lieutenant	Arden M. Deming	04/11/2012	1948-1981
Lieutenant	Michael C. Graham	11/18/2011	1987-2010
Lieutenant	Jack D. Koch	12/27/2011	1952-1983
Firefighter	Jeffrey D. Aldridge	01/02/2012	1989-2012
Firefighter	Ryan A. Blake	05/24/2012	2003-2011
Firefighter	Francis R. Grimm	07/16/2012	1964-1990
Firefighter	Brian J. Heidelman	06/16/2012	1999-2012
Firefighter	Roland Hosier	11/04/2011	1948-1979
Firefighter	William Kenyon	11/02/2011	1964-1990
Firefighter	Richard Thrall	05/13/2012	1950-1977
Firefighter	John R. Throckmorton	03/28/2012	1996-2012

***The following names have been added to the
Columbus Division of Fire Line of Duty Death Monument***

Henry R. Allen 1920-1934
Frank Gerstner 1951-1976

Program

Welcome	Assistant Chief David K. Whiting
“Bagpipe Medley”	Columbus Fire & Police Pipes and Drums
Flag Raising	Division of Fire Honor Guard
“National Anthem”	Battalion Chief Michael Vedra, Firefighter Lawrence Livingston Buglers
Invocation	Reverend Dr. Richard Ellsworth, Fire Chaplain
Remarks	Michael B. Coleman, Mayor— City of Columbus
Remarks	Paula Brooks, President Franklin County Board of Commissioners
Remarks	Andrew J. Ginther, President—Columbus City Council
Remarks	Michelle M. Mills, Safety Chair—Columbus City Council
Remarks	Dan Giangardella, Deputy Director— Department of Public Safety
Calling of the Last Alarm	Fire Chief Gregory A. Paxton
Tolling of the Bell	Assistant Chief Whiting
“Amazing Grace”	Pipes and Drums
Sounding of the Volleys	Firing Squad—Division of Fire
“Taps”	Battalion Chief Vedra and Firefighter Livingston—Buglers
Benediction	Reverend Ellsworth
“Bagpipe Medley”	Pipes and Drums

Special Thanks
Columbus Division of Fire
Battalion Chief Michael Vedra and Firefighter Lawrence Livingston
The Box 15 Club
I.A.F.F. Local 67
The Central Ohio Fire Museum
Columbus Firefighters

Everyone is invited to attend a reception immediately following the ceremony at the Central Ohio Fire Museum, 260 N. Fourth Street. Refreshments provided by I.A.F.F.